

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for bending a bar-like dough piece ~~having a~~ along its length into a predetermined form, said apparatus comprising:

conveying means for continuously conveying bar-like dough pieces thereon in traveling direction that is substantially orthogonal to ~~[[the]]~~ a length of each bar-like dough piece;

~~being means for bending each incoming bar-like dough piece in symmetrically or asymmetrically with respect to the center of said length of said incoming bar-like dough piece; and~~

~~means for substituting at least one of the relationships of the dispositions in said length of said bar-like dough piece of said bending means and said incoming bar-like dough piece with a predetermined position for them.~~

means for determining a plurality of actual positions to be bent on the length of each bar-like dough piece;

means for substituting said determined actual positions with predetermined positions; and

bending means for bending each bar-like dough piece at said predetermined positions that are symmetrical or asymmetrical with respect to the center of said length of said incoming bar-like dough piece into a predetermined form.

2. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 1, wherein said predetermined ~~position is~~ positions are determined so that said bending means

bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with a load substantially centrally located in the length of said bar-like dough piece.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 2, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are also determined so that said bending means bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with loads substantially symmetrically located with respect to the center of said bar-like dough piece, wherein said substantially symmetrically located loads are orientated inversely with respect to said substantially centrally located load.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 3, wherein said bent dough piece takes substantially an M-shape.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 1, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are determined so that said bending means bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with a load located off-center with respect to the center of the length of said incoming bar-like dough piece.

6. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 5, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are also determined so that said bending means bends said bar-like dough piece with loads asymmetrical with respect to the center of the length of said bar-like dough piece, wherein said asymmetrical loads are orientated inversely with respect to said substantially centrally located load.

7. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 6, wherein said predetermined form is substantially N-shaped.

8-17. (Cancelled).

18. (Currently amended) A method for bending a bar-like dough piece ~~having a~~ along its length into a predetermined form, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) continuously conveying bar-like dough pieces in a traveling direction that is substantially orthogonal to ~~[[the]]~~ a length of each bar-like dough piece;
 - b) determining a plurality of actual positions to be bent on the length of each bar-like dough piece;
 - c) substituting said determined actual positions with predetermined positions;
- and
- d) bending said bar-like dough piece at said predetermined positions that are symmetrical or asymmetrical with respect to the center of said length of said bar-like dough piece into a predetermined form.

19. (Currently amended) The method ~~as recited in~~ of claim 18, wherein said determining step includes a step ~~[[for]]~~ of determining the center of said length of said bar-like dough piece.

20. (Currently amended) The method ~~as recited in~~ of claim 18, wherein said determining step includes a step ~~[[for]]~~ of determining the length of said bar-like dough piece.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawing include a change to FIG. 3.

Attachments: Replacement Sheet(s): one sheet - FIG. 3
 [Annotated Sheet(s) showing changes: one sheet - FIG. 3]